



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 14.8

Subject:	Child Protective Services Investigation Case Transition or Closure
Authority:	TCA 37-5-105; 37-5-106; 37-5-107
Standards:	DCS Standards of Practice: 11-300A
Application:	All Department of Children's Services Child Protective Services and Special Investigations Unit Employees

Policy Statement:

Child Protective Services Investigators shall either provide services or transition a CPS case for on-going services with community providers in situations where emergency removal measures are not necessary, or formally close the case within sixty (60) days of receipt of the report.

Purpose:

To establish a uniform process to ensure that the CPS case worker properly transition the case for on-going services or closes the case within the sixty (60) day timeframe.

Procedures:

A. Case File transition for on-going services for non-custody cases	<p>The CPS Investigator (CPSI) responsible for the investigation, classification and initial assessment for a case will either, manage the case, close the case, or transition the case to a Family Service Worker (FSW) for on-going services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Child and family team members will meet to review information gathered during investigation. A family services team (FSTM) meeting will be convened at least ten (10) business days prior to transition.2. The <i>Non-Custodial Permanency Plan (CS-0787)</i> will outline specific services to be provided to the child and family, with specific tasks, responsible parties and expected outcomes. The CPSI will fill out the referral forms for services and participate in the FSTM where the FSW will be involved.3. The CPSI will provide the FSW with copies of all available case file documentation upon transition and provide any other information received no later than five (5) business days of the case transition and on-going as information is received.
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B. Case file transition for custody cases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When a case is transitioned to custody services, the CPSI will be responsible for formally transitioning the case to a Family Service Worker (FSW). The CPSI will provide the FSW with copies of all available case file documentation upon transition and provide any other information received no later than five (5) business days of the case transition, and on-going as information is received. Refer to DCS policy <u>14.13, Confidentiality of Child Protective Services Cases</u> as information is received and transitioned. 2. The CPSI will notify the family and child that a new case worker will be taking over functions of case management and when possible, will arrange for the FSW to meet with the family. 3. The CPSI will initiate a Family Functional Assessment before transitioning the case. If emergency removal, FFA must be initiated within five (5) business days of the date of transition.
C. Case closure	To properly close a CPS case, all CPS investigative tasks, assessment of safety/risk, classification decisions and notifications must be completed within sixty days (60) from the receipt of the report.
D. Completion of SDM assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) All required assessments will be completed as appropriate. These include the SDM Safety and Risk Assessments. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. In cases that do not involve CPIT, the CPSI will recommend a classification decision with final approval from the team leader. The following information/tools may be used to assist in making the classification decision: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Family Functional Assessment; b) Risk Assessment; c) Safety Assessment; d) Investigative Tasks; e) Team Leader consultation; f) Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment; and g) Other assessments as required
E. Case closure -Child Protection Investigative Team (CPIT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CPSI will discuss the classification with all members of the investigative team, and each member will be polled to determine whether there is agreement with the recommended classification for case closure. 2. Members of CPIT will recommend a classification based on information currently available to their respective discipline however, the final classification decision will be at the discretion of the Department.

3. The CPIT form, **CS-0561, Child Protective Investigative Team Review**, will be completed to indicate the outcome of the staffing and whether each CPIT team member agrees or disagrees with the recommended classification. Each team member will sign the CPIT form.
4. Any disagreeing CPIT member's concerns about classification will be noted on the CPIT form.
5. The CPSI will document the CPIT discussion and classification.
6. If the CPIT team members do not reach consensus as to a classification, then the CPSI will request through the CPSTL, a review of the case by the RA or his/her designee. CPIT members will be offered the opportunity to submit additional information to the RA for consideration.
7. The Regional Administrator or his/her designee will conduct a review within five (5) business days of the request, make the final classification decision and send written notification to the team leader within five (5) business days of the review. The written notification will include:
 - a) Case name,
 - b) Date of intake,
 - c) Name of CPSI,
 - d) Name of alleged victim(s),
 - e) Alleged victim(s) social security number¹,
 - f) Allegation,
 - g) Name of alleged perpetrator,
 - h) Date of CPIT staffing,
 - i) Classification recommended by CPSI,
 - j) Classification recommended by majority of CPIT,
 - k) Classification decision of regional administrator or his/her designee,
 - l) The notification will be signed and dated by the Regional Administrator.
 - m) The RA/designee will notify all CPIT members of the classification assigned by the regional administrator or his/her designee.
8. The CPSI will document the CPIT classification decision in TNKids case recordings and will classify the case.
9. Child abuse/neglect will be classified only for the following allegations:
 - a) All sexual abuse
 - b) All severe abuse
 - c) Drug exposed infant/child for a presence of active or inactive methamphetamine lab or use
 - d) Child Fatalities resulting from abuse or neglect

F. Administrative closures	<p>The type of cases listed below will be appropriate for Administrative Closure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anonymous Abandonment of Newborn; Per <i>TCA 36-1-142 and TCA 68-11-255</i>; 2. Courtesy Interviews; (Refer to DCS Policy <u>14.5 Child Protective Services Planning, Initiation and Assessment of Safety and Protection</u>). 3. Other circumstances at the discretion and approval of the Regional Administrator.
G. Case file documentation at closure	<p>At case closure, the CPSI must ensure that the case file contains the items listed below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SDM Safety Assessment 2. SDM Family Risk Assessment 3. Case Recordings to document the following on each contact: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b) Date of contact; c) Time of contact; d) Type of contact; home visit (there must be a home visit prior to closure if case is being closed at sixty (60) days), office visit, telephone conversation, written correspondence; e) Name of the person(s) contacted and relationship(s) to victim; f) Purpose of the contact; g) List of issues discussed and client's response to those issues; h) Summary of the substance of the contact; and i) Additional issues/activities identified. 4. Form CS-0561, Child Protective Services Investigative Review to document the findings of the Child Protective Investigative Team. 5. Form CS-0740, Child Protective Services Investigation Summary and Classification Decision of Child Abuse/Neglect Referral that documents the classification decision. 6. The final entry in TNKids will reflect the status of the case as one of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Case closed, no services required; b) Case closed and family referred to services available in the community; c) Case transitioned, referred to in-home services; or d) Case transitioned to an FSW, child entered state custody 7. In addition to the above documents, the CPSI will obtain a copy of other pertinent documents to be maintained in the case file pertaining to each

	<p>specific case. Such documents may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Verification of medical findings, b) Report of psychological evaluation or treatment, c) Reports from any other service providers, d) Photographs and audio and video tapes, e) A signed release of information form, CS-0668, Authorization for Release of Information to DCS and Notification of Release, as applicable. f) Copies of notification cover letters sent to the Juvenile court, District Attorney General, the professional reporter, and the indicated perpetrator(s), or g) Any other documents obtained in the course of the investigation. <p>8. Initiate the FFA if case goes over thirty (30) days.</p>
H. Investigation incomplete at 60-day timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>TCA Code 37-1-406 (i) mandates that: "No later than sixty (60) days after receiving the initial report, the department or team in cases of child sexual abuse or the department in all other cases will determine whether the reported abuse was indicated or unfounded and report its findings to the department's abuse registry."</i> 2. If the investigation goes beyond sixty (60) days, the team leader will document in the TNKids case recording an explanation for the delay, along with a plan for completing the investigation as quickly as possible.
I. Supervisor's approval of closure	<p>The CPSI will obtain the approval of the team leader on the classification decision, the entire investigative file, and the closure of the investigation. The team leader's signature will signify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All documentation is complete; 2. All information and decisions have been reviewed; and 3. All collaborative service providers and the Courts have been notified upon closing the case.
J. Notifications	<p>Any collaborating service providers must be notified within seven (7) days after CPS case closure.</p>

Forms:	<u>CS-0561, Child Protective Services Investigative Review</u> <u>CS-0668, Authorization for Release of Information to DCS and Notification of Release</u> <u>CS-0740, Child Protective Services Investigation Summary</u> <u>CS-0787, Non-Custodial Permanency Plan</u>
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Collateral documents:	<i>None</i>
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¹ Social security numbers must be obtained on victims and entered into TNKids before an investigation can be closed.